

# THE ACADIAN

HONEST, INDEPENDENT, FEARLESS.

DEVOTED TO LOCAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

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## THE ACADIAN.

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### Select Poetry.

#### WEARINESS.

O little feet; that such long years  
Must wander on through hopes and fears;  
Must ache and bleed beneath your load;  
I nearer to the wayside inn,  
Where rest and quietude begin,  
Am weary, thinking of your road.

O little hearts, that throbb and beat  
With such impatient, feverish heat,  
Such limitless and strong desires,  
Mine that so long has glowed and burned,  
With passion into ashes turned,  
Now covers and conceals its fires.

#### DREAMS ON THE SHORE.

She sat her down where the rocks are low  
(The sun made a pathway across the sea)  
And stretched, though the ships go to  
and fro,

Is there ever a ship will come to me?  
There is daily duty and daily care,  
But nothing happens in glad surprise,  
Shall I never gain my woman's share—  
A beating heart and two dewy eyes?

"My mother folds her hands on her knees,  
And sings, 'God gives us our sleep,  
Oh! I could wait, with a heart as true,  
Was I sure the future has sought to keep!'"

So young hearts chafe through the summer hours,  
(Yet all slips and on down the golden way)  
Waiting their season for gathering flowers,  
The storms will break in the winter day!

She sits her down in the dead of night,  
(And one star peeps through the tiny pane);  
Her face is worn and her hair is white,  
But she smiles, "We shall surely meet again!"

"For a ship came safe o'er life's pathless sea,  
My heart beat high and dew filled my eyes;  
Why had I doubted God kept for me  
All I could crave of a glad surprise?"

"And so when the tide of life rolled out,  
And took my ship to unknown shores  
I learned to trust from my ancient doubt,  
We shall meet again as we met before!"

"There's always work while we have to wait,  
(All ships are safe in the Master's hand);  
The day is short, and it soon grows late,  
(Who calls to-night for the far-off strand!)"

—Girls' Own Paper.

### Interesting Story.

#### Sight Singing

BY S. W. COLE.

Our first duty in discussing this subject is to define what we mean by the term used. Sight singing is the art of obtaining, through the eye, a correct conception of the sound and movement of a musical composition.

We will know that the above is not the popular definition. To the average singer, sight singing means simply the ability to read one part correctly at sight; while, to the musician, our definition commends itself, as all such know that they can read and mentally hear many parts at a time, while they can only sing one. But we propose to discuss this subject in such a manner that all can comprehend it. Therefore, we will consider it from the standpoint of the average singer, who wishes to read correctly one part at a time. The easiest way for us to acquire a knowledge of any subject is to approach it through some kindred topic which we already understand. Doubtless, we can all read fluently our mother tongue, and of course we are able to read a poem or a story and yet not read it aloud. Our eyes run along the lines with lightning-like rapidity, and at the same time we have a correct conception of each word; and we have never thought of wishing that we could hear our story read aloud, that we might better comprehend it. But some will say music is different from our own language, and needs to be heard in order to be understood. Can you understand your story any better by having it read aloud? We grant that you may enjoy it more to hear it read by some fine reader, but understand it better we are sure you will not. Let us suppose that our story is being read to us by some well-trained reader with a beautiful voice, and yet to us in some language we do not understand; we may enjoy the beautiful voice and finished reading, but certainly we shall not enjoy or understand what is read. It is very evident that the difficulty is with ourselves and not with the language. Again, some will say, We can heartily enjoy listening to music that we could not read. No doubt of it, we reply; and so you enjoyed the sound

of your story read by the beautiful voice in the foreign tongue, but nevertheless, you did not understand it.

We insist that music is a language, and therefore that it is possible for us all to learn to read it at sight, if we will apply the same means to music which we applied to our own language when we learned to read it at sight. The limits of this article will not permit us to discuss the details of our method of teaching sight singing. The most we can do is to call to your minds the method which has already proved successful in the learning of your own language, and which will prove just as successful when you apply it to learning the language called music. You first learned to speak your mother tongue, or, rather, you learned the sound, or sound, of it so that you could make the sounds, and could distinguish them when you heard them made by others. Then you learned the characters which are used to represent those sounds. Then you practised every day, in one way or another, until you have become fluent readers. The question naturally suggests itself here, Why is it that there are so few who can really claim proficiency in sight singing? We answer, Because singers, as a rule, are contented to be imitators, rote singers, or anything but thinkers. This state of affairs did not always exist. Thirty or more years ago, the majority of those who called themselves singers in this country read music intelligently. They were obliged to read it intelligently, if they sang at all; for musical instruments of the piano and organ class were scarce outside the large towns and cities. But singers were not scarce; nearly every New England village had its singing-school, and, consequently, most of the churches had large choruses of boys.

As pianos and organs became more numerous, the singing-schools died out; and, as a natural result, sight singers became fewer and fewer in number, the sources of supply having been cut off. The singing-school, as conducted in these days, taught singers to read intelligently; while the tendency of the numerous pianos, melodeons, cabinet organs, etc., has been to produce imitators rather than sight singers.

The subject applies to those who are studying piano, organ, orchestral instruments, and to the harmony student as well as to the vocalist. One recent writer says: "We would urge all students to practise vocal exercises. Pianists and piano pupils are very often reluctant to sing. But, if they would be truly musical, they must sing as well as play." Robert Schumann also says: "Try to sing without the help of an instrument, even if you have but a poor voice. In this way, your ear will constantly improve."

We wish now to speak of sight singing, as it is beginning to be taught in our public schools. Within a few years, it has been practically demonstrated that "ten or fifteen minutes judiciously devoted to music each day will enable the children in the public schools to acquire during school life the ability to read music at sight as intelligently as they read an English author." As a result of this we see a demand from many parts of the United States for teachers who are capable of teaching sight singing in the public schools. Great strides have been taken in this country in every other branch of music except sight singing, since the singing became a thing of the past; and those of us who live to see the close of the present decade will see a wonderful change in the feeling and action of the people toward this neglected art.

How many of those who are now fathers and mothers deeply regret that they had not learned to read music when they were children! How many school-boys feel the same need sorely in their public service in church and in chapel! In view of these facts, then, think what a mighty tide of popular favor will surge toward sight singing properly taught in the public schools, when it is once fully comprehended that the children are taught during their school life to read music as readily as they do their mother tongue! Are not action and reaction equal in opposite directions in every department of life? We may be sure that natural law will not be changed in this case;

for, if we know that this important study has been neglected in the past, so we shall surely see a renewed interest in it in the near future, until sight singing is taught in every town in the United States. In the time of the old-fashioned singing-school, only those who had good natural voices and an "ear for music" were taught to sing; but modern study has revealed the fact that there is such a thing as "voice building," by which naturally weak voices are made strong, just as a person with weak muscles is made strong. Modern study has also proved that a person with a poor "ear for music" can be taught not only to sing the scale, but to become truly musical. What good news is this, then, to the many who have well trained voices, and yet who are as incapable of sustaining their part against a free accompaniment as though they were blind! Then let no one be discouraged, for it is only because music has been considered from a wrong standpoint in this country that Americans are not a more musical people. It has long been conceded that anyone could succeed in law, medicine, mathematics, and many other professions, provided he had patience, energy, and perseverance enough, although he might not be specially gifted in any direction. But, to succeed in music, it is even now considered necessary that one should possess marked qualifications which plainly indicated that nature intended him for a musician.

We fully believe that, in the not distant future, music will be placed on a level with all other professions; and we also believe that the teaching of sight singing in the public schools, in accordance with the principles above mentioned, will be a mighty factor in bringing about such a condition of things. It is already pretty well understood that at least one law applies to music which applies to other studies; namely, that time and labor must be spent on any study or profession, in order to succeed in it. In sight singing, however, we fear that there is an idea in the minds of many that they can succeed without much effort. We wish to correct this mistake. We should not even dream of learning to speak and read German without much time and labor. We might, indeed, make a correct beginning in a comparatively short time; but that would only inspire us with new courage to press on, practising what we had learned and at the same time extending our knowledge until we had acquired a good command of the language. The above is nothing more than a rational, common sense proceeding; and the result just what would be confidently expected. We wish to say that the same common-sense course, and nothing less, is necessary, in order to acquire a knowledge of sight singing.

To sum up what we have said: Music is a language. Consequently, we can acquire a knowledge of music through the same process by which we have already acquired a knowledge of languages. Having a knowledge of language, we can obtain, through the eye, a conception of the sound and meaning of a literary composition.

Having a knowledge of music, we can obtain, through the eye, a conception of the sound and movement of a musical composition, which is sight singing.—Musical Herald.

#### Foes United in Death

There was no fierceness in the eyes of those men now, as they sat face to face on the bank of the stream; the strife and the anger had all gone now, and they sat still,—dying men, who but a few hours before had been deadly foes,—sat still and looked at each other. At last one of them spoke: "We haven't either of us a chance to hold out much longer, I judge."

"No," said the other, with a little mixture of sadness and recklessness, "you did that last job of yours well, as that bears witness," and he pointed to a wound a little above the heart, from which the life-blood was slowly oozing.

"No better than you did yours," said the other, with a grim smile, and he pointed to a wound a little higher up, larger and more ragged,—a deadly one. And then the two men gazed upon each other again in the dim

light; for the moon had come over the hills now, and stood among the stars like a pearl of great price. And as they looked, a soft feeling stole over the heart of each toward his fallen foe,—a feeling of pity for the strong manly life laid low,—a feeling of regret for the inexorable necessity of war which had made each man the slayer of the other; and at last one spoke: "There are some folks in the world that'll feel worse when you are gone out of it."

A spasm of pain was on the bronzed, glacially fairs. "Yes," said the man in husky tones, "there's one woman with a boy and a girl, away up among the New Hampshire mountains, that it will well nigh kill to hear of this;" and the man groaned out in bitter anguish, "O God, have pity on my wife and children!"

And the other drew closer to him: "And away down among the cotton fields of Georgia, there's a woman and a little girl whose hearts will break when they hear what this day has done;" and then the cry wrung itself sharply out of his heart, "O God, have pity upon them!"

And from that moment the Northern and the Southern ceased to be foes. The thought of these distant homes on which the anguish was to fall, drew them closer together in that last hour, and the two men wept like little children.

And at last the Northern spoke, speaking more to himself than to any other, and he did not know that the other was listening greedily to every word:—

"She used to come—my little girl, bless her heart!—every night to meet me when I came home from the fields; and she would stand under the great plum-tree that's just beyond the back door at home, with the sunlight making yellow brown in her golden curls, and the laugh dancing in her eyes when she heard the click of the gate,—I see her now,—and I'd take her in my arms, and she'd put her little red lips for a kiss; but my little darling will never watch under the old plum-tree by the well for her father, again. I shall never hear the cry of joy as she catches a glimpse of me at the gate. I shall never see her little feet running over the grass to spring into my arms again!"

"And then," said the Southerner, "there's a little brown-eyed, brown-haired girl, that used to watch in the cool afternoons for her father, when he rode in from his visit to the plantations. I can see her sweet little face shining out now, from the roses that covered the pillars, and hear her about of joy as I bounded from my horse, and chased the little flying feet up and down the veranda again."

And the Northern drew near to the Southerner, and spoke now in a husky whisper, for the eyes of the dying men were glazing fast, "We have fought here, like men, together. We are going before God in a little while. Let us forgive each other."

The Southerner tried to speak, but the sound died away in a murmur from his white lips; and he took the hand of his fallen foe, and his stiffening fingers closed over it, and his last look was a smile of forgiveness and peace. When the next morning's sun walked up the gray stairs of the dawn, it looked down and saw the two foes lying dead, with their hands clasped in each other, by the stream which ran close to the battle field. And the little girl with golden hair, that watched under the plum-tree among the hills of New Hampshire, and the little girl with bright brown hair, that waited by the roses among the green fields of Georgia, were fatherless.

#### Under a Starless Sky

The night had shut down. No moon was in the sky—no star. A lonely wind sighed across the fields, and it seemed to the man, John Green, that he and the wind were alone, in a dark and empty universe.

Looking up into that unresponsive sky, he felt that in his own soul, also, there was no light. He had sinned, he had suffered, and he felt himself forsaken alike of God and man.

Times had been when he could say to himself that temptation had been too strong for him, and that he had not been to blame because in the way for a sail, "and yet no sail from day to day."

tion had come. Adam said long ago, "The woman tempted me, and I did eat;" and even so, for a long time, this son of Adam had excused and soiled himself. But the day for that was over.

First, the world had found out his sin, and made him pay its penalty in a prison; and now, at last, that penalty being over, his sin had found him out, and he stood face to face with it, and shrank dumbly from the sight. Released from the prison in which his fellow-men had put him, he felt that he was in another prison—in bondage to his sin, and there was no one to open the door.

He had come home to the old country town where his youth had been passed—that youth which had led the way to his forlorn manhood. It had been a youth of idle pleasure-seeking rather than of work; of little sins against his conscience, of petty disregards of other people's rights, and yet a youth so much better than his later life that he had come back to the scene a sinner which was passed, as one can fancy Adam going back to look through the closed gate of Eden.

Here, along this very road, he walked with his mother to church. The churchyard grasses grew above her now, yet he almost seemed to hear her faintly sigh, and he vaguely listened for her slow step beside him, that step of whose slowness he had become impatient once.

Great sobs burst from his heart at last, under the awful loneliness of the black sky. What, in all the universe, can be so desolate as a human soul, bereft of human love and estranged from God?

"I am a bad lot," he said to himself, "and there's not much use in trying to be better."

And still on he went, over the lonely road, under the desolate sky, towards the old schoolhouse where he used to go as a boy, while yet it might have been possible for him to become a good and a happy man.

As he drew near he saw lights shining through the windows—an unexpected sight in this black evening. What did it mean? He hurried on, and stood for a moment outside the open door. And he heard a voice, old and trembling, yet earnest with a passion of hope and faith.

"It is not too late!" the voice cried. "It is never too late. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool!"

Did the man listening outside go in then, of his own volition; or did some unseen force draw him? He never could tell; but in he went, and on toward the old, quivering, hopeful voice, and then down on his knees, there in the midst of the little prayer-meeting, and he cried aloud as one in sore peril,—

"Pray for me, mother! pray for me as my mother would have prayed!"

And then the quivering old voice grew strong with prayer and pity. The man listened; his sobs quieted to tears and as he lifted his eyes, it seemed to him that the very heaven had opened to his waiting soul. In that moment he knew, surely, that come what would, life or death, he should never be alone any more, for he had laid hold on the Infinite Friendship, and had given himself to the obedience of a Divine will, that must beneficently control both heart and life.

#### A Glimpse of Juan Fernandez

The island is accurately described, and the visitor who is familiar with Robson Cruise can find the cave, the mountain paths and other haunts of the hero without difficulty. It is covered with beautiful hills and lovely valleys, the highest peak reaches an elevation of nearly 3,000 feet. After her introduction in 1812, Chill made Juan Fernandez a penal colony, but thirty years after the prisoners remained, slaughtered the guards and escaped. Then it was leased to a cattle company, which has now 30,000 head of horned cattle and as many sheep grazing upon the hills. There are fifty or sixty inhabitants mostly ranchmen and their families, who tend the herds and raise vegetables for the Valparaiso market.

Great care has been taken to preserve the relics of Alexander Selkirk's stay upon the island, and his cave and hut remain just as he left them. In 1868 the officers of the British man-of-war Topaz erected a marble tablet to mark the famous look out from which Mr. Cruise, like the ancient mariner, used to watch for a sail, "and yet no sail from day to day."